



Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett
Southern District of Indiana**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, December 22, 2010
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/ins/>

CONTACT: MARY BIPPUS
(317) 229-2403
mary.bippus@usdoj.gov

INDIANAPOLIS MAN SENTENCED TO 27 YEARS FOR ARMED ROBBERIES OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS - Joseph H. Hogsett, United States Attorney, announced today that Justin Smith, 28, Indianapolis, was sentenced to 27 years in prison today by U.S. District Judge William T. Lawrence. This followed Smith's guilty pleas to robbery and brandishing a firearm in connection with a crime the robbery. This case was the result of a one-year investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department.

Between April 24, 2009, and January 11, 2010, a series of armed robberies took place in the greater Indianapolis area. The robberies were believed to have involved the same group of suspects, including Justin Smith and two others. However, all three did not enter the establishments each time.

On November 20, 2009, Justin Smith entered a Village Pantry located on North Guion Road, in Indianapolis. Smith pulled out a pistol and demanded money from the clerk. Smith asked for the keys to the safe but was informed by an employee that he did not have the keys but that he (Smith) could press a button on the safe which would then dispense fifty dollars. Smith obtained fifty dollars from the safe and exited the store.

Shortly after leaving the Village Pantry, Smith entered a Hardee's fast-food restaurant located on Woodland Drive, in Indianapolis. Smith pulled out a black, semi-automatic handgun, pointed it at an employee and demanded money. The victim stated that she did not have any money. A manager then spoke up and stated that the money was "over here". Smith proceeded to point the firearm at the manager and told him to open the register. The manager opened the register and Smith obtained about \$30 from the register. Mr. Smith then left the business.

Witnesses to the robberies identified Smith as the robber. Smith was arrested on January 14, 2010. During a post-arrest interview with police, Smith admitted participating in numerous armed robberies in and around the Indianapolis area with two other men.

Justin Jones pleaded guilty and awaits sentencing. A third suspect died in an unrelated car accident and was never charged.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Bradley P. Shepard, who prosecuted the case for the government, Judge Lawrence also imposed five years supervised release following Smith's release from prison. Smith was ordered to make restitution in the amount of \$16,643.

###

20101222.Smith.wpd